

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are pending in this application, with claims 1, 12, 21 and 29 being independent. Claims 21-28 are allowed. Claims 1-20 and 29-30 have been cancelled without prejudice. Reconsideration and allowance of the above-referenced application are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-20 and 29-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Trostle (U.S. 5,919,257) and in further view of Gluck (U.S. 5,948,104). Examiner Ha is thanked for the interview, which was conducted with Mr. Hunter on October 23, 2007. During the interview, independent claims 1, 12 and 29, and the Trostle and Gluck references were discussed. No agreement was reached.

Without conceding the propriety of the rejections, claims 1-20 and 29-30 have been cancelled in order to expedite issuance of the allowed claims. Thus, the current rejections over Trostle and Gluck have been obviated by the present amendment. The right to pursue the cancelled subject matter in a continuing application is expressly reserved.

Allowed Subject Matter

Claims 21-28 are allowed. Attention is called to page 3 of the 09/05/2007 Office Action where the restatement of the language from claim 21 appears to inadvertently omit a portion of the claim. In any event, Applicant recognizes that in accordance with M.P.E.P. § 1302.14, the

Examiner's reasons for allowance need not set forth all of the details as to why the claims are allowed.

Applicant does not concede that the Examiner's stated reasons for allowance are the only reasons for which the claims are allowable. The claims may be allowable for other reasons as well. In particular, Applicant does not concede that all of the limitations identified by the Examiner are necessary to distinguish the art of record or to satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112. In addition, the Examiner does not assert, and Applicant would not concede, that the Examiner's reasons have any bearing on the patentability of claims in any other applications directed to the disclosed subject matter.

In addition, each dependent claim stands on its own and may be allowable on its own merits. In particular, each dependent claim may be allowable on the basis of a combination of some of the features recited in the dependent claim and its base claim(s), which combination of features may not include all of the limitations identified in the Examiner's reasons for allowance.

Conclusion

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that issue or comment. Because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment or

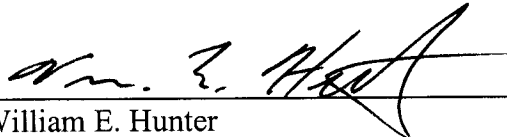
cancellation of any claim does not signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment or cancellation.

It is respectfully suggested for all of these reasons, that the current rejections are overcome, that none of the cited art teaches or suggests the features which are claimed, and therefore that all of the now pending claims are in condition for allowance. A formal notice of allowance is thus respectfully requested.

Please apply any necessary charges or credits, to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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William E. Hunter
Reg. No. 47,671
Attorney for Intel Corporation

Fish & Richardson P.C.
PTO Customer No. **20985**
Telephone: (858) 678-5070
Facsimile: (858) 678-5099